

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-4 and 7-11, 12-19, as amended, and new claims 20-23, will be pending.

Claim 1 is amended to delete the term "derivative" which the Examiner considers to render the claims indefinite. Claim 3 is similarly amended.

New claim 20 recites that the antioxidant is N-1,4-dimethylphenyl (-N'-phenyl)-p-phenylenediamine, which is the antioxidant used in the Example on page 13 of the specification. New claims 21-23 are directed to various classes of antioxidants as disclosed in the specification at page 5, lines 17-18.

Applicants respectfully disagree that the term "derivative" renders the claim indefinite but have, nevertheless, as just noted, and in order to remove any issue of the definiteness of the pending claims, deleted this term and further inserted that each class of named compounds is an "antioxidant." Thus, the pending claims now recite that the process for the hydrogenation of polymer is taking place in the presence of aromatic alcohol antioxidants, dihydroquinone antioxidants, benzimidazole antioxidants or aromatic secondary amine antioxidants. Furthermore, each of these antioxidant compounds have 6 or more carbon atoms.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define the subject matter which Applicants regard as their invention with the definiteness required by the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. One of ordinary skill in the art would have no difficulty in determining the metes and bounds of the claimed subject matter. The practitioner would have no difficulty in either selecting suitable antioxidants within the scope of the claims, including the guidance provided by the specification or, in determining whether any particular substituted aromatic alcohol, dihydroquinone, benzimidazole or aromatic secondary amine was an antioxidant within the scope of the pending claims.

The specification provides ample guidance for the selection of suitable antioxidant compounds, including the reference to the cited Rubber Technology Handbook, page 269 (a copy of which is attached hereto for the Examiner's review). As will be seen, the Handbook lists various representative examples of aging protectors (antioxidants) including several for each of the following types: *p-phenylenediamine-derivatives*, *dihydroquinoline-derivatives*,

naphthylamine-derivatives, diphenylamine-derivatives, benzimidazole-derivatives, bisphenol-derivatives and, monophenol-derivatives.

The practitioner would be expected to have ample knowledge of suitable antioxidants as disclosed and claimed and would have no difficulty in determining whether any particular antioxidant compound would be effective in the hydrogenation reaction under the conditions set forth herein.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of the claims as indefinite should be withdrawn and the application passed to issue.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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Attachment: Rubber Technology Handbook, (Hanser/Gerdner Publications Inc., Cincinnati OH, 1996), page 269.